



**Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona**

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWO PLEAD GUILTY IN REFUND SCAM

PHOENIX -- Noel Anthony Begley, 39, of Glendale, Ariz. and Vaughn Marcellus Robinson, 29, of Biloxi, Miss., pleaded guilty in federal district court here on March 9, 2005 to Conspiracy to Commit Fraudulent Use of a Social Security Number.

Begley and Robinson had been charged with violating Title 18, U.S. Code, Section 371. Both Begley and Robinson admitted to Magistrate Judge Edward C. Voss that between June 2000 to May 2001, they had been part of a conspiracy involving several people to obtain merchandise from department stores by the use of fraudulently acquired personal checks from various banks. The bank accounts were opened in assumed names using social security numbers that had not been issued to them. Each man also acknowledged purchasing thousands of dollars of merchandise with their fraudulent checks. The merchandise was later refunded at the same stores by other conspirators. Any money in the bank accounts was withdrawn before any of the checks were presented to the banks for payment. Begley and Robinson admitted sharing in the refund proceeds from the merchandise that had been purchased with worthless checks. The total loss caused by the conspiracy was in excess of \$125,000.

A conviction for Conspiracy carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. Sentencing is set in the Robinson case for May 16, 2005 and in the Begley case for May 23, 2005 before Judge James A. Teilborg.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the FBI. The prosecution is being handled by Richard I. Mesh, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-04-0373-PHX-JAT
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